



Editorial

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Editor, Hawaii Medical Journal

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Our first two manuscripts this month deal with medications. The first by Berman and Johnson described a form of therapy with which many physicians may not be familiar, "OPAT" (Out-Patient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy).

Homecare companies now provide and manage outpatient services such as fluid replacement, supplemental nutrition, and pain management. With OPAT, homecare companies can provide this service, with the physician monitoring management of the antibiotics.

The authors reviewed 302 courses of OPAT administered to 221 patients in a six-year study from Steve Berman's busy infectious disease practice. OPAT was successful in 94 percent of the episodes. Major advantages of OPAT include significantly less disruption of the patient's life, in hospital confinement and far more economical care.

The second manuscript discusses substance abuse and dependence. Dr. F.M. Baker served as Chief, In-Patient Services at the Hawaii State Hospital at Kaneohe. She recently relocated to Salisbury, Maryland, but we will hear from her again, as she has submitted several other manuscripts to the Journal.


Sixty-six percent of the patients studied had multiple drug dependencies: alcohol, cannabis, crystal methamphetamine and/or cocaine. Despite the fact that this was a small study of only 35 patients, the authors clearly identified the specific type of intervention performed in the Kaneohe State Hospital.

The physician survey about the barriers to good end-of-life care by Braun and Kayashima should be read by every physician and other "health care providers." The majority of the responding physicians (367) had attended to terminally ill patients within the past year and felt the physician should be the first to tell a patient that he or she is dying. Kathryn Braun, a member of the ad hoc committee on living and dying with dignity and her co-author Reiko Kayashima add yet another important study and review of an ever increasing medical dilemma: physician-assisted suicide (P.A.S.) and physician-assisted death (P.A.D.).

Look for the column by Honolulu Star-Bulletin's contributing editor, A.A. (Bud) Smyser, "Doctors Must Support Physician-Assisted Death" in next month's issue of the Journal.

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Book Review

Medicine in Quotations: Views of Health and Disease Through the Ages

Edited by
Edward T. Huth, MD and T. Jock Murray, MD.
Philadelphia: American College of Physicians; 2000.
524 pages. Hardcover \$49.00,
ISBN 0-943126-83-5

Editor's Note

As a bibliophile and voracious reader, I ordered Medicine in Quotations from the American College of Physicians. After receiving the book, I placed it on my desk, then opened my mail only to find a review by Dawn Chalaire in Science Editor September-October 2000. I had planned to review the book for the Hawaii Medical Journal, but Ms. Chalaire did it for me very well. We reprint it here with her permission.

Norman Goldstein, M.D., F.A.C.P.

Perusing a copy of *Medicine in Quotations: Views of Health and Disease Through the Ages*, one cannot help being struck by the sheer volume of literature written through the centuries about physicians and their profession.

For those who lack the time or inclination to read all of the more than 2500 works referred to in its pages, however, Huth and Murray offer an edited version – a collection of 3000-plus excerpts from some of the world's greatest writers and thinkers. The result is a book that contains wit, insight, humor, and profundity in unusual abundance.

As the editors explain in their introduction, quotations were chosen not only for their relevance to medical concepts and practice, but also for their relevance to all human affairs. (They were not chosen for their conformity to the editors' views.) The entries appear under topic headings from miracles to myositis ossificans, from circulation to civilization, and from preventive medicine to publishing. Although diverse, the topics as a whole serve to illustrate how inextricably health and medicine are woven into almost every aspect of life.

The book's topic headings are arranged alphabetically. Quotations appear chronologically under each heading (with the person to whom a quotation is attributed noted at the beginning and the work in which it was found at the end) to show the progression of thought on each topic through time. This allows each quotation to be viewed separately and as part of an expanding larger context: Quotations listed under a single heading make up a complete unit, each topic contributes to the book as a whole, and the book contains hundreds of references to other works that, when viewed collectively, provide an even more complete picture of the human condition.

A large number of quotations appear under some topic headings, including doctors, physicians, medicine, and medical practice. This is only proper given the book's subject, but many of these quotations are very similar, and several could be eliminated without sacrificing

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